

The River Cam

Recreational use

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River Manager

Conservators of the River Cam

A river with an history

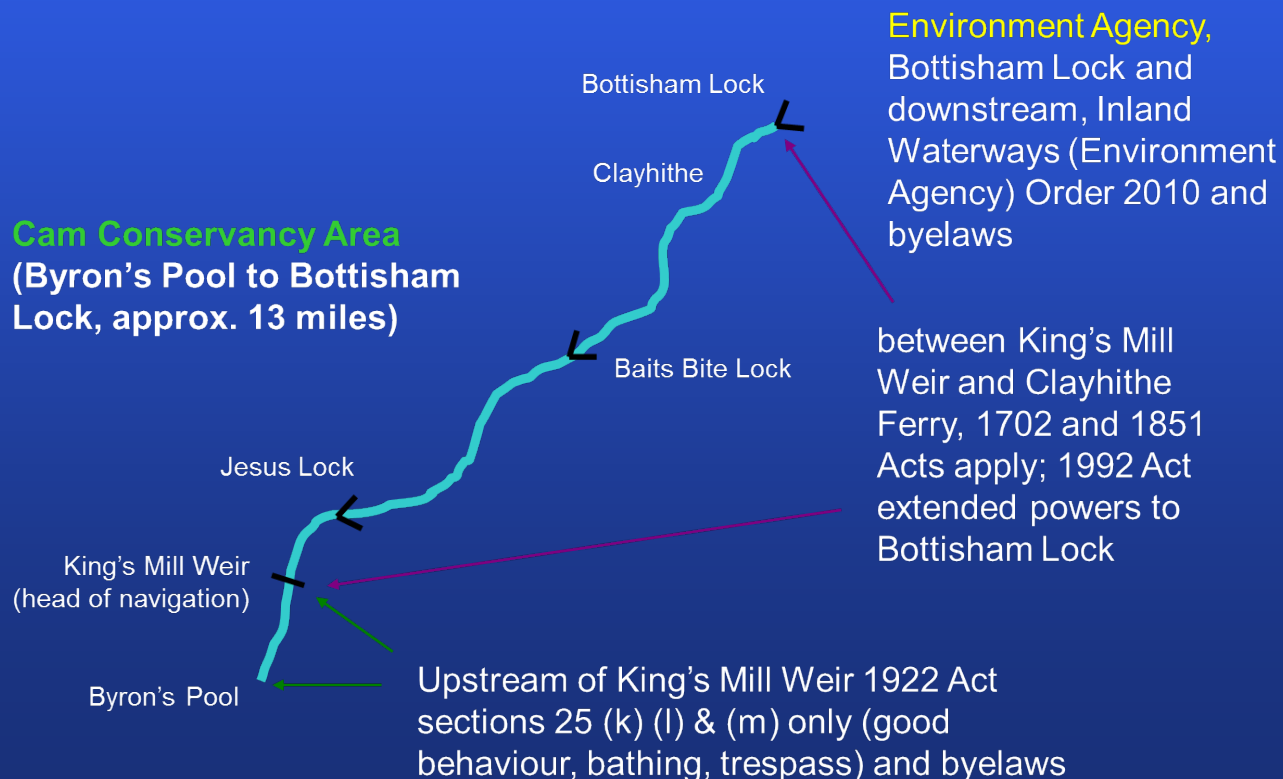


Picture: British Library

- Functional navigation for trade since Roman times
- Victorian times onwards, increasing leisure use

Formation of the Conservators

- 1702 Act of Parliament, Reign of Queen Anne
- Role 'To maintain navigable the river Cam'



Rowing



- ‘Bumping’ races evolved in the 1820s
- First Town Bumps 1868
- Town and Gown societal division
- Iconic boathouses
- River widened purposefully in 1930s
- “We were here first, it’s our river”

Bathing and swimming



- For 'the great unwashed'
- Bathing at Newnham
- Lord Byron and the Grantchester Group
- The annual 'Swim Through' ended in the 1980s

Angling

- Jolly Anglers established 1885 at Earith
- Cambridge Fish Preservation & Angling Society
- Top coarse fishery
- Legacy of Percy and Lacy Anderson



Sailing

- Cam Sailing Club first race 1900



Now located at Waterbeach

Motor cruising



- Cambridge Motor Boat Club founded 1911
- Club relocated to lands at Clayhithe 1919
- Present Clubhouse built 1974
- H.C. Banham of Cambridge & Horning
- Maurice Tyrell – wooden template GRP

Punting and dinghies

- Scudamore's Punting Company founded 1910
- Strange's Boathouse, Chesterton Lane – sold by the Conservators!
- Day trips to the Orchard coffee-house, Horningsea



Canoeing & kayaking

- Cambridge Canoe Club, University
- Canoe Polo
- Regional visitors – popular day paddle
- Annual Cam Marathon in national BCU calendar



Artistic inspiration

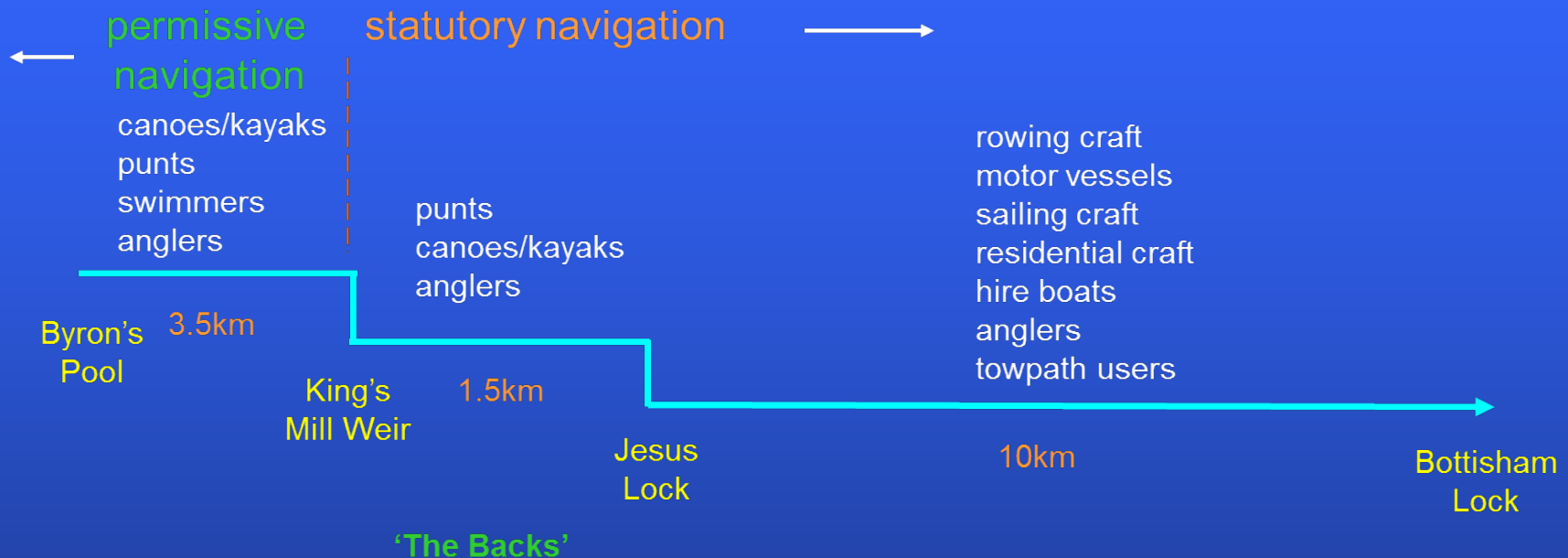
- For artists and poets

“At the top of your voice, where you swayed on the top of a stile... Your voice went over the fields towards Grantchester. It must have sounded lost. But the cows watched... enthralled”.

Ted Hughes



Idle and competitive pleasures



- Informal zones of overlapping use
- Evolution of Club regulations
- Influence on Conservators' byelaws & vice versa
- Entrenched behaviours

Issues now

- Safety on and beside water
- Protecting the public



Population growth

- Capacity issues at certain times
- The Conservators have no powers to directly limit the numbers of boats on the navigation
- Pleasure of the river experience sullied



Row, row, row your boat

	Total sculls	Total double sculls	Total pairs	Total fours	Total eights	Total rowing craft
Mar-00	108	10	38	108	229	493
Mar-01	114	9	39	113	234	509
Mar-02	118	8	39	111	228	504
Mar-03	127	4	45	116	231	523
Mar-04	130	4	50	117	230	531
Mar-05	142	15	44	117	232	550
Mar-06	140	18	49	113	246	566
Mar-07	151	20	46	123	242	582
Mar-08	167	22	47	132	257	625
Mar-09	190	27	54	138	267	676
Mar-10	200	28	55	143	267	693
Mar-11	193	31	53	152	264	693
Mar-12	194	31	53	152	268	698
% increase, '00-'12	80	210	39	41	17	42

- Growth in rowing, for sport and leisure
- More sculls, women and veterans
- Displacement below Baits Bite, other waters

Event, or conflict, management?



- Over 200 approved events annually
- More events, longer duration
- Marginalisation of other users (river & towpath)
- Demand for Conservancy staffing presence
- Cost of byelaw proceedings for interfering with races
- Conservancy response: charge event fees

Wildlife considerations

- Impact of traffic volume on local wildlife?



Residential waterspace

- The Cam – a ‘parking lot’ for boats?
- Varying size and standards
- Unrecoverable costs to navigation authority – enforcement, reclaiming abandoned vessels



Moorings Policy



- riparian mooring permitted if no obstruction to navigation, e.g. garden-end
- Mooring Policy exists to control 'fly mooring' which can obstruct navigation
- City Council has its own Moorings Policy and licensing scheme for resident boat owners
- Strict limits on visitor moorings to discourage abuse (48 hr, no return within 7 days)

Supersize Britain

- National trend – residential boats are getting bigger
- The Cam is narrow, available navigation width reduced
- Policy needed for maximum vessel size?



Erosion and siltation

- The Cam is filling up in another way
- Natural processes and boat wash
- No dredging programme in place
- Unprotected riverside lands collapsing into the river



Funding for repairs?

Meeting public expectations

- Inadequate facilities for residential and visiting powered boaters
- Visitors leave disappointed, local users disaffected by perceived lack of management
- Small number of staff, safe working practices
- Conservancy hamstrung by legislation



Water quality

- Water Framework Directive – all water bodies must achieve ‘good ecological status’
- Environment Agency remit
- Catchment Based Approach (CaBA)
- Rubbish management and controlling diffuse pollution (sewage, oils)
- Invasive species



A river with a future



Yours to start shaping today!